

BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



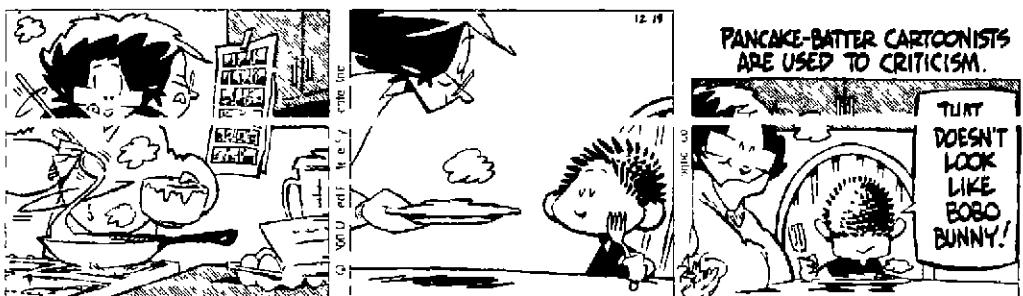
9 CHICKWEED LANE



JUMP-START



ROSE IS ROSE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



DILBERT



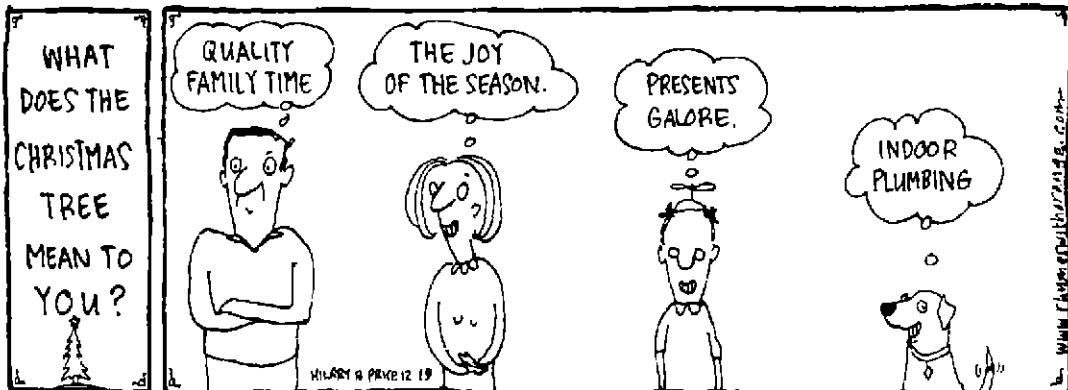
DENNIS THE MENACE



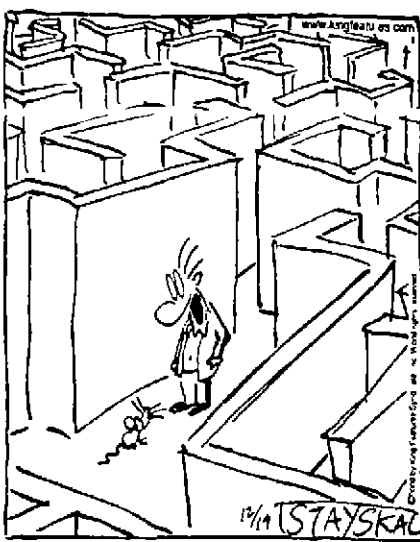
FAMILY CIRCUS



RHYMES WITH ORANGE



RALPH



Today's Birthdays

Country singer Little Jimmy Dickens is 70. Actor James Booth is 70. Actress Cicely Tyson is 67. Rhythm-and-blues singer-musician Maurice White (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 59. Actor Tim Reid is 56. Paleontologist Richard E. Leakey is 56. Actress Elaine Joyce is 55. Musician John McEuen is 55. Actor Robert Urich is 54. Singer Janie Fricke is 53. Actor Mike Lookinland is 40.

I NEED HELP



SCRABBLE

SCRABBLE puzzle content including word lists and directions.

HOROSCOPE

For Wednesday, Dec. 20, 2000. ARIES (March 21 to April 19) While you have lots of physical energy, you need to resist the impulse to waste it on the wrong activities. TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Adopting a risque attitude makes you the life of the party. GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Resist the temptation to squirm should you become the unwilling object of an investigation. CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Put your tumultuous emotions to work for you. LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Let your focus be on healing divisions rather than creating them. VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Once you find your voice, others will wonder what has kept you silent for so long. LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) That irritating co-worker is a whole lot easier to deal with once you've had a short break. SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Should you be feeling in a rut, start fantasizing about a more glamorous future. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) A mystery is finally solved by a most unexpected source. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You notice significant connections that previously seemed unimportant. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Resist the urge to over-spend before you actually have that check in the mail. PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Make the most of the extremely altruistic mood that has come upon you.

WORD SLEUTH

LONG AND THIN

Word search grid for Long and Thin puzzle.

Monday's unlisted clue: GRAND. Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Tuesday's unlisted clue hint: SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY. Antenna, Fishing pole, Javelin, Spaghetti, Arrow, Fungo bat, Lincoln, Vermicelli, Bearpole, Harpoon, Needle, Worm, Eel, Hose, Snake.

For solution, see Classified.

ACES

By Bobby Wolff. Dummy's diamond queen does to East's kind, and East ponders his next move. If he is a man of impulse, he will choose a routine heart shift, signaling the end of the defense. South wins his heart ace and draws trumps. After he cashes his club ace, he returns to dummy's diamond ace and enjoys three heart discards on dummy's clubs. This brings his total to 12 tricks, and it's slam and rubber to North-South. What happens when an experienced and thoughtful defender holds the East cards? The first order of business is to visualize South's hand. What could South hold to justify his bidding? Clearly, South has a six-card self-sufficient trump suit and four robust hearts. His diamond fineness marks him with two diamonds, leaving space for only one club — the ace. With this clear picture to guide him, East can do the "unthinkable" — he returns a diamond, giving dummy a free finesse. South accepts and discards his blocking club ace on a high diamond. Unfortunately, when he tries to discard three hearts on dummy's clubs, dummy's club jack does not survive. West ruffs the third club, and a super defensive play defeats the slam.

N.Y. TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 1107

N.Y. Times Crossword puzzle grid and clues.